

Windy

by Brian Orr

With a cluster of dignitaries and a dozen dopey-eyed cows in attendance, a work crew from San Isabel Electric winched the state's first fifty-meter wind anemometer tower high into the Huerfano sky.

Located just off of Highway 69 in the middle of a windy pasture owned by Ed Johnson, the tower-raising ceremony was the culmination of years of planning between the state of Colorado, San Isabel Electric, and entrepreneurs Reinhard Peter and Ed Johnson. Peter and Johnson are partners in Sunrise Enterprise, a renewable energy division.

The anemometer tower has wind measuring points at 30, 40 and 50 meters as well as two weather vanes, which continuously transmit data to a data logger at the base of the pole. San Isabel will collect the data monthly to gauge strength and continuity of blowing winds for a possible future wind farm.

This area previously was home to a thirty meter anemometer tower, which reported continual wind speeds in the Class 6 range, with Class 7 being the highest.

Planning and zoning board member Larry Mapes was in attendance, and told the assembled crowd that he had run cattle right on this very spot years ago- "I coulda told ya the wind blew here without having to put up a tower." Lew Edmundson, the chairman for the P&Z board, said "I've lived here all my life, and I've cussed the wind all my life; now maybe we'll get some good out of it."

V.I.P.s included Bill Wood, General Manager of San Isabel Electric, and Drew Bolin, Director of the Governor's Office of Energy Management and Conservation.